NATS Packet

NAVAL AIR TRANSPORT SERVICE COMMAND. PACIFIC WING

JULY 1945

THE COVER

"Air Power", John Strack's cover photograph, is a dramatic study of NATSPac Skymasters lined up for service at NAS Honolulu. To make it, Strack practically flattened himself on the ground, then "shot" with a telephoto lens.

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After he had made the cover picture, Photographer Strack walked down to the other end of "Skymaster Row" and--just for good measure--clicked again. To the left is the scene he got.

OKINAWA: NATS BOX SCORE

Iwo had been bloody, but when the high command announced Okinawa's conquest, it acknowledged that Yanks had their toughest, costliest fight to date in the Pacific War. NATSPac, growing mightier by the day, had moved in with the Yanks on Okinawa and set new records in hauling war essentials in, hauling wounded out. The Okinawa campaign will be studied by military strategists in years to come, and the increasing dependence of land forces on air transport will be apparent. As a matter of record--in which all NATSmen can take full pride--PACKET presents on page 8 of this issue a digest of NATSPac's share in the conquest of Okinawa, on the road to Tokyo.

FEMININE TOUCH

Beginning this month, passengers aboard one Skymaster flying between Oakland and Honolulu will experience the "feminine touch". Ten WAVEs are reporting to VR-11 to be checked out as flight orderlies aboard the luxury liner--their main function being similar to that of stewardesses aboard commercial planes: to serve food, and to see that passengers are comfortable.

Having WAVEs as flight orderlies is not new to NATS. The girls have been working some of the Mainland routes for several months--and successfully.

We imagine that passengers will enjoy the innovation. More important, the WAVEs will help release men for more frequent runs west and south of Honolulu.

From the male orderlies' personal standpoint, the assignment of WAVEs would appear to mean elimination of the Stateside trips to which they'd become accustomed. If this were the case, it would quite naturally be a shock to any VR-11 orderly whose occasional Oakland-bound flight was a real morale-builder.

But we're happy to note, for the men's sake, that the girls won't replace them altogether in the rosy part of their duty. The ten WAVEs reporting to VR-11 will fly only on the luxury liner, the rest of the passenger flights will continue to have the men. And in the future, with schedules increasing between Honolulu and the Mainland, the men may be Oakland-bound just as often as they were before. Good duty!

WATCH THAT DUD!

"War souvenir-hunting can be more perilous than hand-to-hand combat fighting," warns Lieut. W.B. Gibson, VR-12 Casualty Report Officer. The admonition is prompted, Lieut. Gibson points out, by recent accidents to NATSmen on Jap-rid islands caused by the unexpected explosion of "dud" shells and other explosive objects abandoned by the enemy.

Although search parties systematically clear former combat areas, some explosive items turn up despite precautions. These are "souvenirs" that should not be tinkered with--they're more dangerous than an enemy you might meet face to face, because you don't expect them to harm you.

Moral: Your good health is the best souvenir you can bring back home with you. DON'T take chances by fooling with something a Jap left behind.

NATS PACKET

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OFFICER-IN-CHARGE: ENSIGN VOIT GILMORE

Acting Editor: Sam Weinstein, Sp(V)3c
Art and Layout; L. J. Bause, Ptr2c; E. J. Ehret, PtrV3c.

Distribution: Charles Tasso, Slc.
Vari-typing: Tony Neppl, Y2c.
Photographer (NAS, Honolulu, Photo Lab): John Strack, CPhoM.

CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE

Articles: Lt. Comdr. E. R. Little; Lt.(jg) M. G. Miles; Lt.(jg) J. M. Taylor; G. E. Loudenback, Sp(V)2c; L. L. Dorrell, AMM2c; Lt.(jg) Frank Love.

Photographs: John Strack (cover, page 5); Lt.(jg) Richard Goff (pages 1,2,3) Ted Kozachuk, Slc (page 20).

Ice Cream! Army Sergeant Albert F. Shinokis is at NATS Evacuation Center quonset at Guam several hours after a phosphorous shell exploded as he entered a Jap cave on Okinawa. Ensign Virginia Smith, flight nurse, and Corpsman Stanley Supkis, PhM2c, see that he is happy while awaiting transfer to hospital. NATS evacuated him and 31 comrades on one flight.

Guam

DARKNESS BLANKETS GUAM ---THE AMBULANCE GANG SWEATS IT OUT ---- THEN: 'FIRST PLANE'S COMING!'

Darkness covers the field. Inside the NATS Air Evacuation Center at Guam, under glaring lights, all is ready. Doctors and nurses chat. Corpsmen play desultorily at cards. . . and the long rows of empty litter-stands stretch clean and grim down the low quonset.

Outside wait the ambulances, a score of them, great red crosses splashed across their khaki sides. Like those inside, the drivers strain unconsciously to catch the faint thunder of the first NATS hospital planes back from Okinawa--first of many VRE-1 Skymasters that will land in the next few hours with loads of wounded fighting men.

A gray-clad Red Cross girl makes a last check of refreshments, especially the ice cream. Then someone says: "First plane's coming in!"

...Just down the strip regular passenger-cargo schedules of VR-11 are coming and going, swelling Guam's volume to 32 scheduled arrivals and departures a day. With CinCPac Advance Headquarters, new Pacific nerve center, just eight miles away, the NATS terminal bristles with urgent business.

Like a gold rush town, the base is noisy with activity around the clock. There are scores of officers, hundreds of men; it's the biggest NATSPac detachment west of Hawaii. The sun is broiling; red dust is everywhere, then lashing rains turn the white coral and the earth to a dirty ooze. Everything is urgent--shells, blood and mail to target; supplies and passengers to the Philippines; rush cargoes headed Stateside.

...Behind this scene is almost a year of hard work. It began Aug. 10, 1944, 21 days after Guam's invasion, when the first four-engine plane to follow the invasion was flown to Orote Field by Lieut. H. F. Liebmann and Lt. Cdr. A.E. Mackrille,

Above: Stars and Stripes over NATS Camp Area, Agana Naval Air Base, Guam.

Guam CONTINUED

then of VR-11. They had to circle an hour while a ditch on the field was filled hastily. The "tower" consited of nine oil drums topped by a plank.

Today's Detachment is at Agana Naval Air Base. At present Lt. Comdr. Dennie D. Peterson, O-in-C, is frantically trying to double or treble everything he's got. The four nose bays must be increased to eight. Messing must be prepared to feed thousands. More warehouses...

...The first evacuation plane had landed. Before props stop, corpsmen and ambulances close in. Moments later men injured on the battlefield within the same day are being refreshed in the air evacuation quonsets then they move on to hospitals.

It is a parade that will not end until Tokyo is won. At Guam NATSmen are digging in for busier days ahead. They're enlarging everything--including that invaluable supply of ice cream for the boys "coming back".

AFTER THEIR 1400-mile flight from Okinawa, walking wounded proceed to VRE-1 center at Guam, then hospital. Tags on men's uniforms list name and injury.

IN AIR evacuation center, wounded remain no more than half hour. Here they're getting sandwiches from flight nurse, Lt.(jg) Ruth Broadfoot, while awaiting check.

'ROXIE'S GRILL' is name of air evacuation galley, so called in honor of hard-working 'Roxie' Lambie (left) of ARC. With her: Lt(jg)s Myrtle Hanna, Ruth Broadfoot.

RELAXED AND waiting for removal to base hospitals, wounded are served juices, sandwiches, coffee and ice cream. ARC workers, nurses, and corpsmen help.

IMMENSITY OF evacuation service is indicated by this stack of litters. Flight Corpsman G. J. Tallia, PhM2c, watches a loading of wounded who will go on to Honolulu.

AT NATS Detachment Guam, Lt. Comdr. D. D. Peterson, O-in-C, and his assistant, Lt. T. F. Egan, discuss plans for expansion of their important operation.

Nats Pac NEWS MONTH

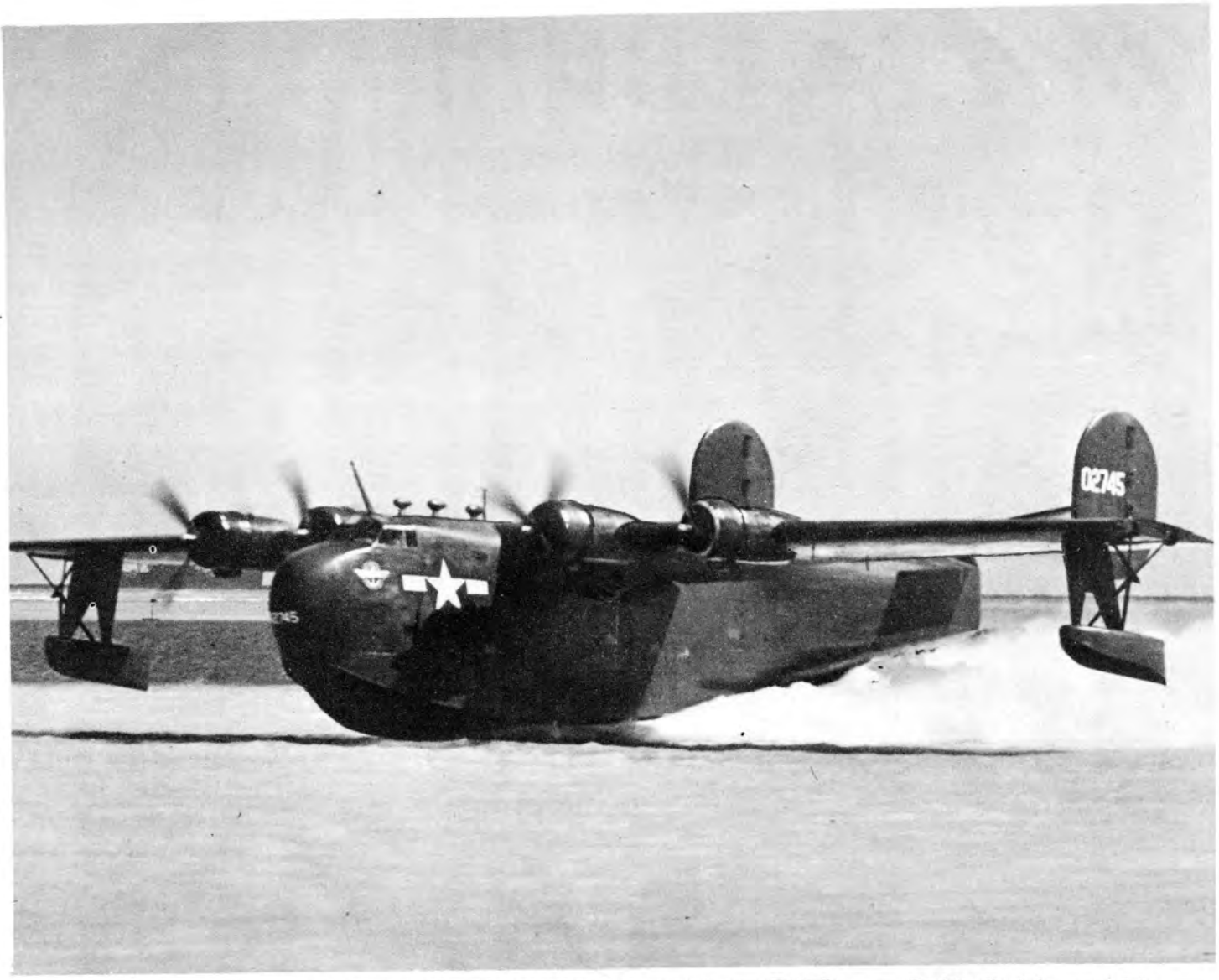
ABOVE Between planes, Lt. Larry French of baseball fame showed Honolulu NATSmen his famed 'screw ball'. L.to r.: Ed Burns, Andy Stopa, Gene Palmertree, Lt. French, John Anderson, Bill Cohen (sitting), and Art Oustalet.

LEFT ABOVE - Capt. Mildred McAfee, WAVEs chief, flew NATSPac to Hawaii. She and assistant, Lt. Frances Rich, were met by Lt. Cdr. Eleanor Rigby, representative for 14th Nav. Dist. (center).

LEFT - West-bound on NATS, Henry Luce, TIME and LIFE editor-in-chief, discussed Pacific news coverage with, l.to r. Lt. Cdr. N.L. Crabtree, Asst. CinCPac Public Relations Officer; former TIME-man Lt. Cdr. E.R. Little, O-in-C NATSPac PubRel Unit; and Lt. W.S. Frederick of CinCPac.

LOWER LEFT - At the Don Budge-Wayne Sabin exhibition match at NAS Honolulu last month, Harlan 'Lee' Whitten, S2c of VRJ-1 (left) was peeping through the fence when a commander grabbed him and said, 'You're to be ball boy'. Never having seen a tennis court before, Whitten did his best. But he got a bit confused, as did Budge. Sp(A)2c Sabin (right) won easily.

BELOW - At Oakland, VR-4's 'B' five won 12th N.D. title. Comdr. Peterson presents cup to Coach Gaffney



THE NATS-PACIFIC FLEET - PB2Y-5R

The giant transport sliding its belly into NATSPac seadromes from Alameda to Manila is the PB2Y-5R, called the Coronado by the Consolidated Vultee Corporation which makes it.

To the Navy it's the PB2Y-5R because: PB stands for Patrol Bomber, which was the original function of the design: "2" is the model number; "Y" is the Navy's designation for Consolidated aircraft; "5" is the series number, meaning that it is the fifth modification of that model; and "R" indicates transport.

VR-2 Coronados fly to the Philippines; those of Pan American Airways, the contract operator, are on the San Francisco-Honolulu shuttle.

SPECIFICATIONS

Wing span----------115'
Length (overall)--------79'3"
Height (overall)----------27'
Weight empty-----37,500 lbs.
Standard gross---68,000 lbs.
Pay Load-----up to 15,000 lbs.
Range----------3,000 miles.

Basic crew---plane commander, first pilot, second pilot, navigator, radio operator, flight engineer, and orderly (when passengers are carried).

Power plant---four Pratt & Whitney 1830-92 engines (Twin Wasp) and Curtiss electric propellers. (Inboard engines turn four-bladed steel, reversible propellers which are four inches less in diameter than the outboard, three-bladed aluminum or "dural" propellers. The inboard propellers are of steel because they are exposed to salt spray thrown up by the hull, and their anti-corrosion qualities are superior to those of the relatively spray-free alloy outboard propellers. They are shorter to help avoid chopping water.)

Rated horsepower---1200, takeoff; 1100, cruise.

Cruising speed---140 knots per hour.

Top speed---200 knots per hour.

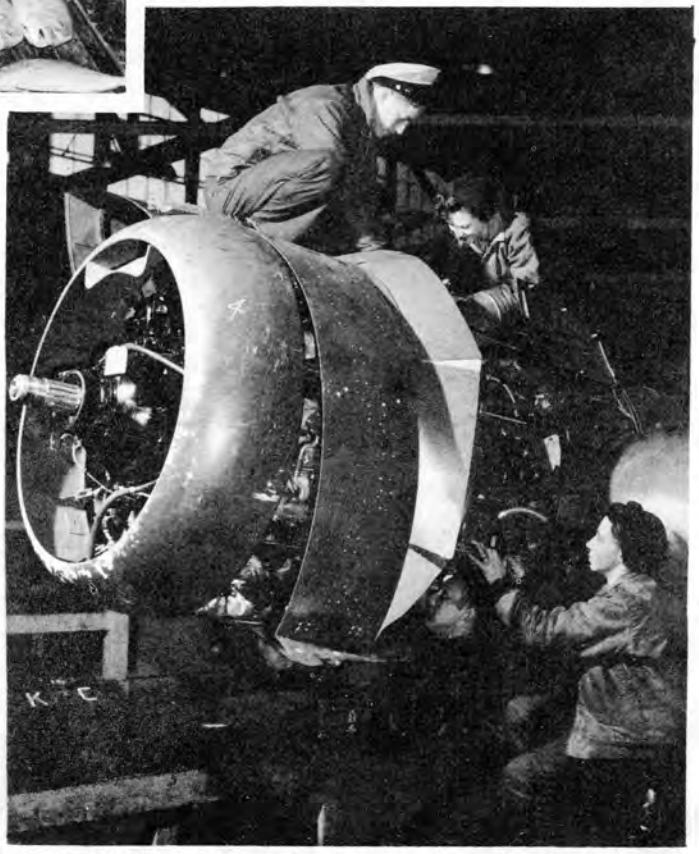
Nat's ALBUM

SQUADRON PHOTOS OF THE MONTH

THEY PROVED THEIR STORY---C.S. Larson, ACMM (center), took VR-10 pals L.H. Walls, AMM3c (right), and Glenn Webster, AMM2c, out in his 16-foot launch, 'Sea Dog', and this mess of alua resulted. Several NATSmen keep pleasure craft at Keehi Beach, only five blocks from NATSPac headquarters, Honolulu.

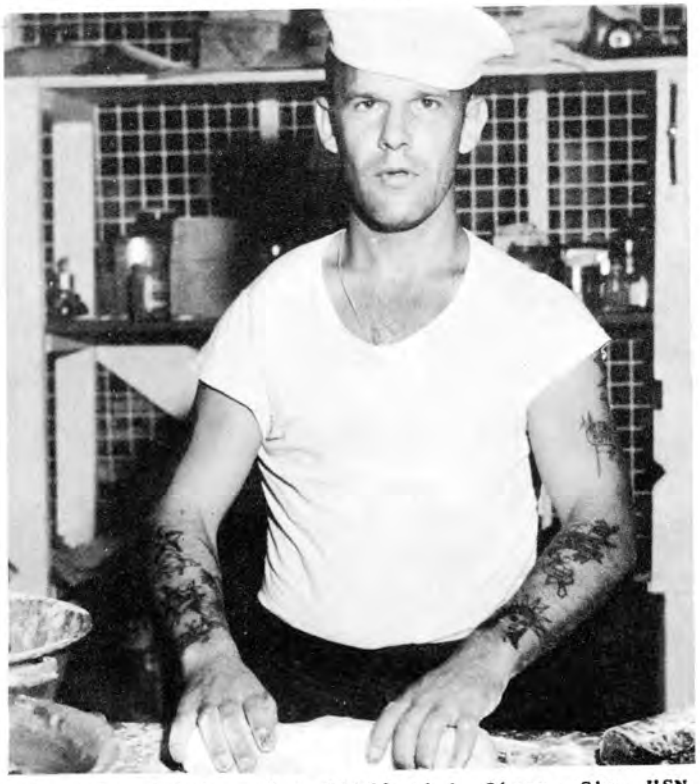
MISS MITZI BITCHI---This Japanese 'lucky dog', now a loyal American, is mascot of NATS Unit Saipan and it is said that good luck comes to those who touch her. When Comdr. D. L. Mesker, VR-2 skipper, left on first Coronado flight to Manila, SpV3c L.W. Shelton brought Mitzi along to be touched for luck.

TABLE TENNIS CHAMP---Jimmy McClure, several times national table tennis champion, is now ARM1c in VR-11, with more than 500 flight hours to his credit.



THE FEMININE TOUCH---At VR-2's Alameda shops, some enlisted WAVEs help with man-sized jobs. Dora Youman, AMMI3c, is assisting Chief J. C. Grace atop a Pratt & Whitney 1830-92 engine. Below, Mary Garland, AMMI3c, works with L. P. Thomsen, AMM1c, inside the cowling. The Coronado squadron has 30 WAVEs, two of them officers. Of the enlisted WAVEs, 23 do clerical work.

NO TIME WASTED---Scene twice a day at NAS Oakland: VR-11 hospital plane arrives. Before crew is out, VR-4 pulls cowling for check while VR-12's NATS Unit removes patients. Within two hours, plane is ready for return hop.



VR-13's 1,000th---When Clifford A. Olson, S1c, USN, reported to VR-13, he was presented with a case of beer and given a 48-hour liberty before going on duty as baker in the squadron flight galley. Reason: The cherry pie expert was 1,000th man to report to VR-13.

POINT BARROW WARMUP---When Skytrains of VR-5 arrive at the 'Top of the World', they are sealed up and pumped full of hot air until their 30-minute turn around-pause is over. Otherwise, they might freeze up. Arctic Seabees, who receive Seattle papers the day they are printed, as well as other essentials, swear NATS is 'the best thing yet.'

THEY SEE EYE TO EYE---VR-2's Eye brothers (l. to r. Edward and Kenneth Eye), both AMMF1c, enlisted together in January 1942, went through boot camp and made all their rate advancements at the same time.

Shells for Shuri

NATS-DELIVERED MORTAR SHELLS HELPED WIN SHURI

Air delivery of 36,000 rounds of 81 MM mortar shells, accomplished by NATSPac and the Pacific division of ATC, has been credited with aiding in breaking Japanese resistance in the vital Shuri position during the battle for Okinawa.

In a message of thanks to the two groups which transported the shells to the embattled island, the late Lt. Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner Jr. said:

"Without the expeditious delivery of this ammunition, the mortars of our 10th Army would have been silenced and our infantry deprived of much needed fire support."

During a 10-day period before the Shuri position was captured, NATSPac flew 180,000 pounds of shells to Okinawa. These shells were flown west from Honolulu at the rate of 10,000 pounds a day by VR-11 and VRE-1 Skymasters, and 8000 pounds a day by VR-2 Coronados.

VR-4 TO MOVE

NATSPac's stateside maintenance squadron, VR-4, will soon move from NAS Oakland to Moffett Field, Calif., it has been officially confirmed.

Also moving to Moffett will be the VR-11 Training Detachment, now located at Crow's Landing, Calif. Thus, NATSPac's training and major overhaul activities on the west coast will be based at Moffett when the move is made. Operations will continue at NAS Oakland, which will remain a terminal for flights of VR-3, VR-5 and VR-11.

Located 30 miles south of San Francisco, Moffett is the Navy's Bay Area base for blimp operations. VR-4 plans to take over one large blimp hangar and build new runways, warehouses, offices, and housing and messing facilities.

ARE YOU NATS-WISE ?

1. Who is the Commander, Naval Air Transport Service?
2. Air evacuation operations by VRE-1 were begun at Okinawa how soon after the first day of invasion?
3. "VR" is the Navy's designation for an air transport squadron. What do "V" and "R" mean?
4. What is a "cherry picker"?
5. The outboard propellers of a PB2Y-5R have three blades and the inboards have four. Why?

(Answers on inside back cover)

VRE-1 OPERATIONS AT OKI SET EVACUATION RECORD

As Okinawa was secured last month figures were released showing that airborne return of wounded during that campaign reached a new high in the Pacific war.

Landing the first transport plane on the island eight days (April 8) after the invasion, NATSPac's VRE-1 flew 1,248,800 over-ocean air miles to evacuate 9,424 casualties, and made 446 round-trip missions through June 22, when Okinawa was declared secured.

In addition, VRE-1 planes carried 1,312,800 pounds of war-vital cargo to the target, including mortar shells in direct support of land operations.

Other cargo included whole blood, medical supplies, flame throwers and 788,500 lbs. of mail--or 35,484,000 letters during the 75 days of operation.

VRE-1 evacuated 4,663 wounded fighting men to Honolulu. It carried 3,830 passengers into Okinawa and returned 1,268 to Guam.

Air evacuation reached its peak late in May with 12 round trips to Okinawa in 24 hours to return 576 wounded. On the last day before the island was secured, VRE-1 flew eight evacuation missions, returned 254 wounded.

VRE-1 continues to fly wounded from Oki during mop-up operations.

SURPRISE VISIT

While Lt. Comdr. H. E. Hinman was busily directing medical operations for VRE-1 at Okinawa (see page 18) he was advised by his family that his cousin, Marine Sgt. Burritt H. Hinman, was also at Okinawa--with the Sixth Division. "Doc" didn't have time to look up the sergeant until he was about to return to Honolulu. On his way to Marine headquarters to inquire he passed a revetment where wounded were being treated and waiting to be evacuated by NATS. One of the patients with a minor injury looked familiar--it was Marine Sgt. Hinman!

OKINAWA WOUNDED are quickly moved to Guam hospital facilities after their 1400-mile flight. Everyone turns to. Lt. Comdr. H.E. Hinman, VRE-1 flight surgeon, in skivvy shirt, is seen helping CPhM S.F. Sturtevant carry a patient to waiting ambulance. Corpsmen Prestridge, Watkins, Hague and Weaver (l.to r. on loading platform) are removing others from the Skymaster.

Flight Corpsman

ALWAYS ON THE SPOT ---- SELDOM IN THE SPOTLIGHT

When history records the gallant air evacuation job of NATS Pac's VRE-1, there should be a section devoted to the hard-working, unglamorized guy who--to wounded patients flying from the battle-fronts--is proving to be everything from the misguided description of Bed Pan Commando to Father Confessor.

Dungaree-clad, husky, efficient, he can handle the medical job, the intravenous administration of whole blood or plasma, the injection of morphine. He knows how to give penicillin, how to care for a burn case, the treatment for shock and hysteria. He can bandage an amputation or cut a cast to ease the pain of swollen flesh.

He's a teammate of the Navy flight nurse. And he has the strength to do the jobs the nurse can't do, such as turning an injured man. One minute he's making a wounded man physically comfortable; the next time he's soothing the nerves of a shell-shocked casualty. From experience, he's learned what to say and when to say it. The patients like him---he's "one of them".

The corpsman's work isn't confined to flight hours. On the ground he helps load and unload the wounded, lifting and carrying the litters until the sweat drips from his naked back.

Many of these air evacuation corpsmen have had medical or pre-medical schooling, or special training in surgical or X-ray work or experience as laboratory technicians. Others are a cross section of the trades--clerks, salesmen, grocers, cobblers, athletes, etc.

Most of them have attended the Navy Hospital Corps School, and the Flight Training School for corpsmen in Alameda. Of the 156 corpsmen in VRE-1, 16 learned techniques in flight with an Air Rescue squadron aboard Patrol Bombers before the air evacuation squadron was formed.

Averaging 24 years of age, these men like their job and bring to it an energy and skill that does much to keep the squadron's top-notch record in air evacuation. The record they've helped produce: evacuation of more wounded out of Okinawa than all other air services combined.

A RUSH FLIGHT finds four corpsmen pitching in to complete a standard medical kit for use aboard plane. J. H. Frantz, PhM2c; F. E. French, PhM1c; J. R. Crothers, PhM2c; and B. L. Morgan, PhM1c.

AWAITING FRESH LOADS from Oki, corpsmen relax briefly at pinochle in the Guam Air Evacuation quonset. L. to r: Glen Bridges, PhM1c, Jack Wilson, PhM1c, Roland Zwick, PhM2c.

PAA

NATSPAC'S CONTRACT OPERATOR ENDS NAVY SERVICE DEC.31

PAA CONTROL TOWER---Beyond hangar is S. F. Bay landing area for contract-operated Coronados & Boeings. VR-2 Alameda base is directly across bay.

The Pacific contract service performed by Pan American Airways, Pacific-Alaska Division, will end December 31, and thereafter all NATS services will be Navy-operated. Six Coronados being flown by PAA will be returned to NATSPac July 16, and the remaining Coronados and the four Boeing 314s are scheduled for return at the end of the year. VR-2 will take over the contractor's "lift."

This will end the military-commercial partnership begun in September, 1942, when the Navy signed up PAA's transpacific personnel, equipment and experience to help build the aerial highway to Tokyo. PAA, which had pioneered in the Pacific since 1935, was assigned Coronados, Mariners and ex-PAA Boeings which the Navy bought, to operate. The contractor flew military loads from Treasure Island, and later from San Francisco Municipal Airport, to the South Pacific and Australia. In July, 1944, its fleet flew 2,331,330 ton miles.

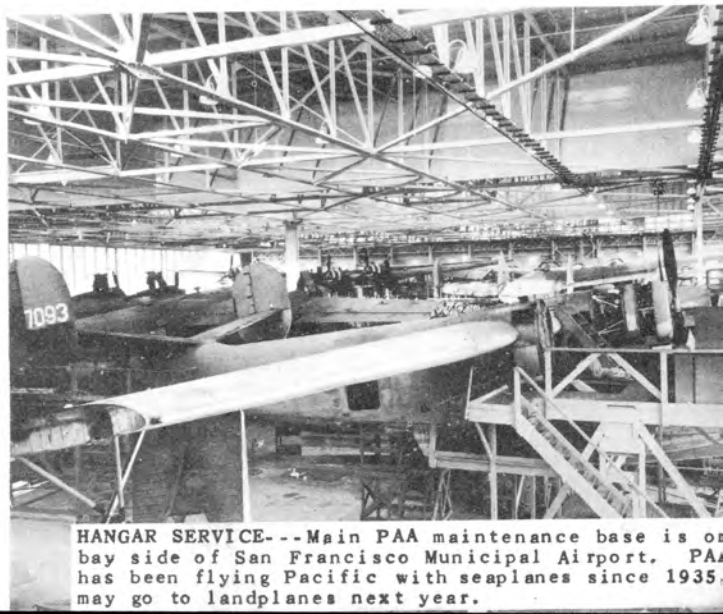
Since Last December PAA has concentrated on the Mainland-Honolulu shuttle. Even without its ten Mariners which had operated in the SoPac, its May total was 2,650,000 ton miles flown, reflecting increased utilization and increased average available payload. Some PAA Coronado trips have carried over 10,000 lbs. payload, one of them 10,567 lbs.

Contract termination marks the end of a program under which NATS has been gradually assuming direct operation of all its services. Discussing plans for the future of PAA in the Pacific, L.C. Reynolds, Pacific-Alaska Manager, recently stated that the company may resume commercial transpacific service by January 1, 1946, with landplanes.

BOEING ON CRADLE---The giant rides out of water on a marine railway. Four such clippers fly Pacific.

CORONADO ON WHEELS---Beaching differs from that for Boeings. PAA's Coronado utilization for year tops 8 hour per da

CLIPPER TURNAROUND---Mechs work fast to keep up the 10.4 hours per day utilization on Boeings. When NATS-PAA Atlantic contract ended, PAA leased back the four Atlantic Boeings for commercial use.



HANGAR SERVICE---Main PAA maintenance base is on bay side of San Francisco Municipal Airport. PAA has been flying Pacific with seaplanes since 1935, may go to landplanes next year.

NATS Americanized Popu. He now wears G. I. shorts; his woman has new lava-lava.

HOME *again*

NATSMAN POPU OF POPILISI ROTATES BACK to SOPAC, WITH SOME NEW IDEAS ABOUT WOMEN AND THINGS----

Headboy Popu of Popilisi has been rotated homeside. Home from the wars, too, are Tovia and Siona and Aeuga and 28 of his other sturdy Polynesian friends.

After their year's "overseas" duty with NATS at Palmyra and Canton islands, they well deserved the special VR-2 Coronado flights which recently returned them to their native palm-shaded villages on Funafuti, Nukufetau, Nanomea, Nanamama and other of the Ellice atolls.

Not in the twelve months had they seen their families; and mail had been a one-way arrangement---their letters home, and a few gifts, having been dropped upon their *fales* by NATS shuttle planes bound out of Funafuti for Tarawa.

Yet when the "2x5s" were ready to take them home, Popu and his friends were not happy. They had grown to like the excitement of war-busy Canton and Palmyra; and, despite the total absence of women, they were reluctant to leave the "big cities" and return to the solitude of their native motu.

They were the last group of Ellice and Gilbert island native volunteers brought to Canton and Palmyra to serve as messmen, compartment cleaners, laundrymen, etc. for NATSPac units.

It all began in May, 1943. Captain D. F. Smith, then ComNATSPac, on a survey trip with Comdr. T. E. Gillespie, then Commanding Officer of VR-10, and PAA Section Superintendent W. J. Mullahey, noticed the lack of mess rates at the Line and Phoenix islands. Fortunately, in peaceful 1939, Mr. Mullahey had discussed that selfsame problem with the British High Commissioner of the Western Pacific at Suva. So Captain Smith, upon arrival at Funafuti, found the British Resident Officer ready with a solution; volunteers would be recruited from remote native villages.

With Captain Paul Wernham, British Colonial Service, acting as recruitment officer, a Coronado took off northward for Nukufetau. The Wildcat Squadron then based at Funafuti had promised air cover, for this "expedition" preceded Tarawa's conquest by many months. The trip was without incident; anchor was dropped in a southwest cove of the lagoon near the native village. Eager natives canoed the recruiting party ashore, where, under 90-foot palms, the villagers had gathered to view the first seaplane ever to light in their waters. While the labor proposition was being put, the attention of the junior members of the plane's crew was diverted by some of the native girls casually shrugging into skivvy shirts--usually a Sunday costume.

EVERYONE VOLUNTEERS

The standard Gilbert and Ellice islands Colony "contract of service" was offered. Twenty or 30 men between 16 and 25 years of age were required, to work one year at a shilling a day plus food and one blanket. Every eligible youth in the village immediately volunteered!

The fifteen finally selected, each carrying an extra lava-lava (printed cloth used as a wrap-around garment) and gifts of sprouted coconut seedlings, rubbed farewell noses all around and came aboard the plane with lively curiosity.

The native colonization of Canton that began that night was a matter of wonder and amusement all around. The imported "boys" had never seen machinery, automotive equipment or modern conveniences. They examined the movie screen's back for evidence of the actress' person; they continually flushed the heads for the roar and swirl that resulted; and late into the night they played blinker with auto and barracks lights.

Next day the tables were turned: one of the "immigrants" scooped up a 14-inch flying fish as it sailed beachward from the shark-infested lagoon, gave its squirming head a casual thump on a rock, and commenced munching the flyer like a huge banana. An astonished NATS fisherman watched for a while, then quietly lost his groceries.

MUTUAL RESPECT

It was different when Popu and his barefoot, lava-lava-clad friends flew up a year later: mutual respect had replaced astonishment, for the "boys" did useful work willingly and well--and, in turn, they thought NATSmen capable characters.

Popu soon became head boy at Canton, where he and 16 of his friends worked around the hotel on the Navy side of the island. They soon became "money-wise" and, over the months, collected a tidy extra sum from the sale to NATS passengers of Canton shell bracelets, necklaces, and earbobs made by spare-time handicraft. On departure day each boarded the special VR-2 plane with a wrist watch, an identification braclet of the latest style, and a footlocker heavy with red lava-lava, hair tonic, and talcuum for his women. The white man's goods at Canton's Ship's Service and PX had been appraised as more productive of results at Popilisi *motu* than his green money-paper. But each was barefoot, clad only in lava-lava.

AT Funafuti, junction stop for the other home islands, Popu met the Coronado inbound from Palmyra. As his 15 friends who had worked on that island came ashore he was astonished to see that, while none had footlockers or other gift-laden gear, each was completely rigged out in dungarees, shirts, caps--and shoes!

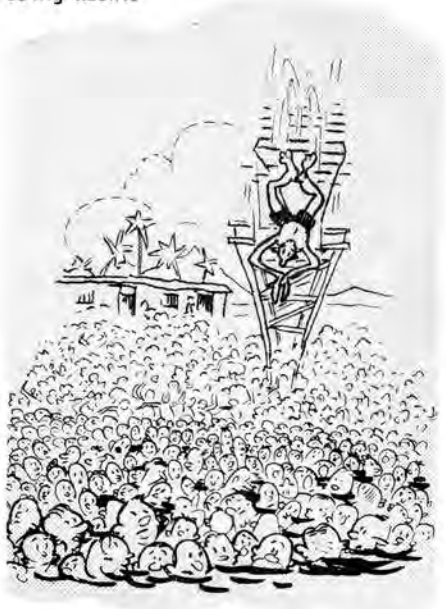
As Popu paddled his pau-pau for Popilisi, across the lagoon, he began thinking about women and islands and shoes; and he concluded that rotation was, in many ways, the thing. -- E. R. LITTLE

Popu has seen his last of Spam; back on his tiny atoll raw fish is standard diet.

NATS SCRAPS

HONOLULU

As summer heat bore down on NAS Honolulu, NATSmen flocked to Keehi Beach in unprecedented numbers. Hundreds from Navy activities at Pearl Harbor began coming over for dips as well. By June, said Captain Ingalls, station skipper, over 4000 a day were using Keehi.



EBEYE

Ebeye reports: "A weird assortment of Philippine souvenirs is starting to make its appearance among flight crews returning from the newly opened NATS seaplane base at Sangley Point (Manila). Bolo knives in elaborately-carved wooden scabbards, exquisitely-woven women's purses and colorful sandals with curved wooden heels are among the more popular items."

OKINAWA

May load utilization on NATSPac Guam-Okinawa flights: 99.3 percent.

NEW YORK

Whole blood shipments via NATS are now originating at New York and Washington, as well as at Chicago. On one day recently VR-3 flew 4,840 pounds of it to the West Coast for forwarding to battlefronts by NATSPac.

OAKLAND

VR-4's Progressive Maintenance Division hung up a new record: A Skymaster undergoing the second progressive engine change was completed in 12 days. That beat the previous record by four days.

HONOLULU

The Bishop of Honolulu recently held a special dedicatory mass at the new NAS Honolulu Catholic chapel which was designed by VR-10's Lt. (jg) Walt Litwin, made from a quonset hut by Seabees and VR-10 carpenters, and decorated by Bernard Langlais and Alfred DuPont, artists of VR-10 and VR-12. Hawaiian-style, the beautiful chapel is lined with bamboo cut from forests near Honolulu and has wood cut-outs of island flowers. A ship's bell is in the tiny steeple. Chaplains who have seen the unusual building (it's hard to believe it ever was a quonset) are so enthusiastic that its design may be adopted for advance base chapels.

SAIPAN

Brigadier General O'Donnell of the Army Air Forces wrote the OinC, NATS Unit Saipan, his "sincere appreciation for the courteous and willing manner in which NATS cooperated" in transporting Army combat crews to rest camps in Hawaii when other means of transportation were inadequate.

HONOLULU

Jim Levensaler, BM2c, VR-12 passenger handler at the NATS Honolulu terminal, was reading a "letter" from his 18-month-old daughter.

"What's that you got, son?" came a voice from behind. Levensaler turned to give the questioner a piece of his mind.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Admiral," gasped the boatswain's mate. "I was just reading the first letter I ever got from my little daughter, Joan, one and a half years old."

"Very interesting," replied the Admiral, as he obligingly autographed the document: "W. F. Halsey."

ALAMEDA

"Bill of Rights" information has been put in pamphlet form by the VR-2 education department. Men wanting to know what's what when they emerge from the Navy have their answers well boiled down, with special emphasis on government provisions for education and employment.

MANUS

An official report recently reached ComNATSPac headquarters concerning gremlins in forward areas. "Envelope gremlins infest the Admiralty Islands. Sometimes they cause consternation among persons who receive mail from VR-13. These gremlins creep into the office at night and lick and seal the envelopes. Next day, the mail yeoman has to trim the ends off the sealed envelopes before he can use them. He then reseals the ends with tape or a stapler.

"Addressees of official mail from VR-13, and particularly of confidential mail, often react with alarm at receiving such a resealed envelope. No doubt they visualize tampering with the military security of mail. We can assure them, however, that their fears are groundless. It's just gremlins."

GUADALCANAL

NATSmen opened an R5D hatch and saw a 9200-pound ship's reduction gear awaiting unloading. Seabees lent a hand; and hydraulic jacks and two cranes were used. It was out in an hour.

HONOLULU

Shortly after the third seaplane in three months ended up on the reef in Keehi Lagoon in May, a wag put up a new sign at the distraught VR-10 headquarters in Honolulu: SEAPLANE SALVAGE DIVISION.

HONOLULU

New hands reporting aboard VR-10 at NAS, Honolulu, now receive a 15-page pamphlet which tells them about their squadron and facilities available to them. After a "glad-to-have-you-aboard" message by Lt. Comdr. J. R. Mackroth, there is a diagram of the squadron organization, a map of the station, a list of religious, athletic and service facilities, and even a set of tips on the Honolulu Shore Patrol.

Ensign W. K. Turner of VR-10 Personnel prepared the handbook, and already has won the thanks of many a squadron tenderfoot.

PELELIU

Time saver: "All incoming planes upon making radio contact with the Peleliu tower are asked plane's mechanical condition and flight number. If plane is o. k. to go through, this station has an additional 20 minutes to prepare the outgoing crews. If n. g.--how welcome to flight crews the additional sleep!"

HONOLULU

Father and son who went through boot camp together in early 1944 were reunited recently in Honolulu when Audra Abney, 19, HA2c, paid a surprise visit to his dad, Virden R. Abney, 39, S1c, of VR-12.

Young Abney, who has a surface Navy billet, was able to pick up a few pointers from his father, who has spent nearly a year with NATS in the forward areas.

KWAJALEIN

An excited Air Transport Officer busily calculated a plane's arrival time, translated it from local to Greenwich time, then muttered, "I can't figure out whether this plane is one hour early or 23 hours late."

ALAMEDA

Presentation of the Air Medal to Plane Commander Gale C. Burkey, Lieut. USN, high-lighted the first personnel and materiel inspection of VR-2 made by Rear Admiral Reeves on June 8. The decoration was forwarded by Vice Admiral Stark for Burkey's outstanding airmanship and meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flights as pilot of a PB4Y-1 bomber on anti-submarine patrol in the Bay of Biscay and the English Channel, during the period September 1943 to March 1944. Lt. Burkey also wears the DFC.

GUAM

The passengers felt lousy when their R5D REM'd, and the ATO, Lt. J. K. Smyth, felt worse. But cheerily he met them and said, "We've got a four hour wait. Let's have a picnic!" Picnic they did, right under the plane's tail--munching while mechs repaired. Great fun--and no griping!

MANILA

NATS Unit Manila magnanimously shared its supply of office furniture with a Naval officer representing Flag Utilities. He got: one large orange box (desk) and one broken "K" ration box (chair).

MARIANAS

Visiting NATS crews are being given an opportunity to see the many points of interest on a battle scarred island of the Marianas. Each day, at a time that doesn't interfere with plane operations, a truck takes newcomers on an island tour, visiting the B-29 base, the caves, and other points. One recent excursion went into the hills to visit a large cave that formerly served as a Jap dressing station. In spite of the fact that snipers were still hiding close by, all hands agreed that it was much pleasanter to visit the spot on D-plus-300 than in 1944 when the Nips were more resentful of an intrusion.

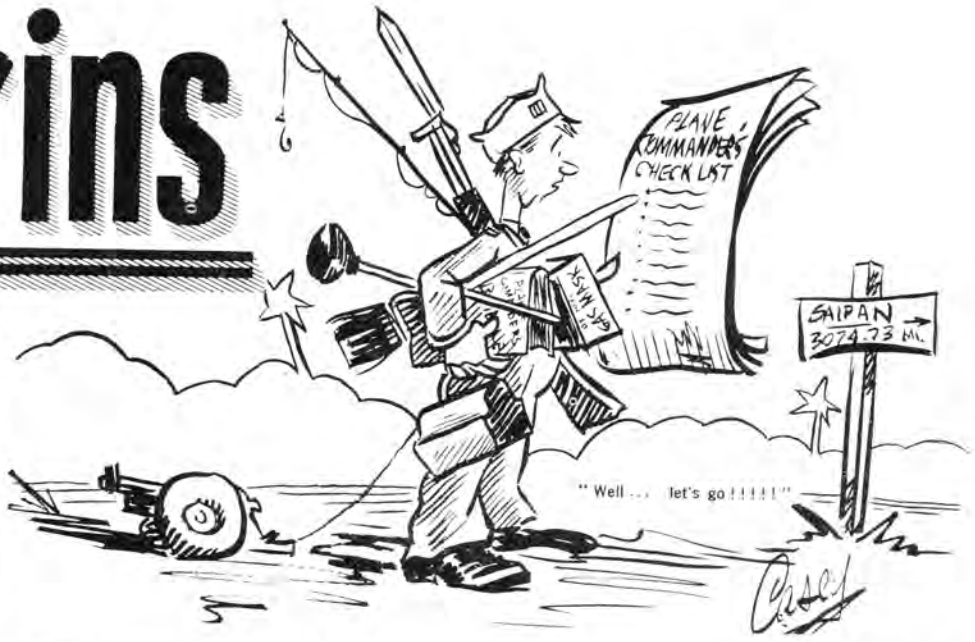
JOHNSTON

A shark story worth telling has reached us from the shores of Johnston Island. After an afternoon of trolling in the Pacific a band of NATSmen had but one of the fabled tuna family to show for their efforts. Without enthusiasm, they began cleaning it. In a flash a school of sharks streaked in, attracted by the blood. Being versatile, the NATSmen quickly changed from tuna to shark fishermen. They rigged and squared their lines for a fight. The first shark to strike carried off a one-half inch line. But the second--a prize 135-pound sand shark--was brought in and up, claims Johnston, went a new mid-Pacific record.

ENIWETOK

While NATS Unit Eniwetok was busy, en masse, loading a 6000-pound ship's shaft-and-screw assembly, ComNATS and ComNATSPac arrived for a visit. Moments later ComMAR-GILS flew in. "It was a busy, star-studded morning," wrote the OinC.

Wingrins



PEACE LOVING MARINE

A badly wounded Marine evacuated by VRE-1 joined in a bit of conversation as the plane sped from Okinawa to Guam. The topic was fighting. "I've had all the fighting I want," he said. "If I ever get home again, I'll never fight any more--you won't find me arguing with anyone, either--not even with my mother-in-law!"

HOLD THAT BULL

Lt. Odell Sapp, who recently replaced Lt. Comdr. Bob Proctor as O-in-C NATS Unit Ebeye, wrote a letter to Hedron in which he metaphorically described the determination necessary to "carry on" as new skipper of the unit. "This 'new broom' is somewhat handicapped. . ., but intends to 'grab the bull by the tail and face the situation.'"

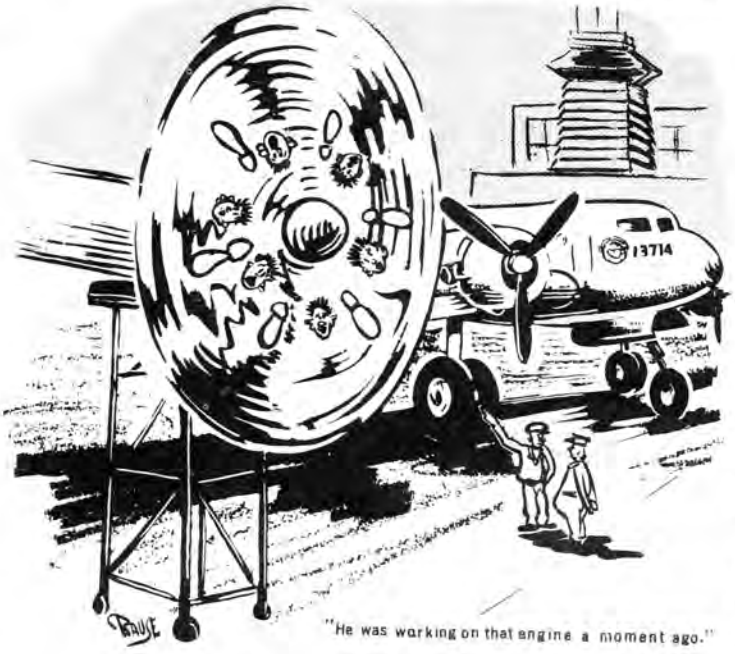
A mixed metaphor, perhaps, but we're happy to find someone wanting to grab the bull instead of shooting it.

POINT OF VIEW

Most NATSmen during attacks on the airfield at Okinawa quite sensibly headed for the nearest cave and stayed put. Others of a more curious mind lingered outside to see what gives. During a raid one of the curious group huddled in a cave: NATS guys yelled to a "Hey, come on out and see this one!" To which someone inside retorted: "To hell with that, brother--I ain't on no sight-seeing tour!"

•◆•

In Seattle a VR-5 man entered a tavern very optimistically and emerged later very misty optically.



"He was working on that engine a moment ago."

FIVE STAR FINALE

In the early days of the war Fleet Admiral Nimitz was a passenger aboard an Alameda-bound plane. As the plane landed it struck a log that was drifting in the seadrome area. Crash boats arrived immediately to remove passengers. Admiral Nimitz, hatless, looked out a window and started to direct removal of the passengers. A boatswain's mate in charge of one of the boats looked up and snapped: "Take it easy, old timer, we'll handle this!"

After the passengers were all on land again, the boatswain's mate learned the identity of the "old timer". After regaining consciousness he was presented with a commendation from the Admiral for a job "well done."

"DOC" BIT ON THE NATS TRIP-BUT HE GOT EVEN

Not long ago a young doctor in a far Pacific ACORN unit was just about heartbroken when he received very official-looking BuPers dispatch orders directing him to the amphibious forces of the Seventh Fleet. Even as he made his reservation on NATS and checked out he kept thinking what a swell billet he was leaving behind--and worrying more than a little over what might be in store for him in the amphibs.

Meantime, the ACORN gang was having one hell of a laugh. Everyone from the Exec on down knew that the Communications Officer had faked the dispatch. They had always ribbed Doc about how pleased he was with his billet, and how awful being detached would be. Now they were going to let him actually go through the motions of "reporting" to a more rugged outfit.

Doc was to report to the NATS terminal at 0400 the following morning. Sadly he packed his gear. Tears in his eyes, he even "gave" his small victory garden to a friend.

But at midnight the Exec could stand it no longer; he decided Doc had sweated enough. So privately he told the victim about the monstrous joke.

Everything was so realistic, the jesting Communications Officer began worrying a few hours before plane time. His fellow conspirators assured him, though, that if Doc actually turned up shipside, they would haul him off. But they knew nothing of the Exec's talk with Doc.

Next morning there was no Doc. The steward's mate on duty said he had left on the flight. Panic struck the group. Breakfast and lunch were somber affairs. Then, just as the noon meal was ending, in walked Doc. With him he had a supply of sedatives for the Communications Officer who clearly had won the title of most nervous man in the service--outside of the Jap army.---Frank Love.

"I'm beginning to think we ought to transfer Smith off that Zamboanga run."

WHAT, NO HASH MARKS?

Yeoman First Class Zarrilli, editor of the VR-8 Ball at Patuxent River, will receive a Betty Grable pin-up for contributing this one:

The MARS, world's biggest flying boat, had just arrived at VR-8 to be used for training JRM (production model MARS) crews. As she lay in the seaplane basin, one of the boys riding past the giant plane in a station bus asked the driver: "Is that the regular MARS?"

"Gosh, I dunno," the driver replied. "I dunno whether she's the regular MARS or USNR."

PAGING THE OPA

The O-in-C NATS Unit Sangley Point informs us that in the liberty town of Cavite eggs are 20¢ each and one night club charges $2.00 for a bottle of beer. Must really drain the purse if a guy would ever want an egg in his beer.

•◆•

A devoted wife was seeing her husband off on a VR-5 plane for duty in the Aleutians. Watching a cocker spaniel board the plane, the wife complained to the Air Transport Officer.

"A fine thing," she sighed, "letting a dog have passage aboard the plane when wives must stay in the United States."

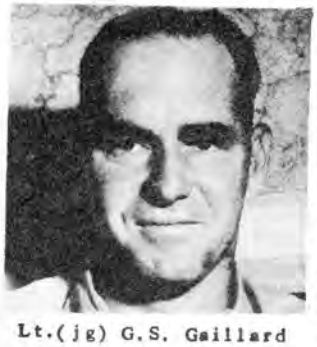
"After all, Madam," replied the A. T. O., "all the men can pet the dog."

"NOW he tells us his Polaris was probably a passing clunk!"

SCENES LIKE THIS were within view of NATS Unit Okinawa while Japs were trying to regain Yontan Field. Jap suicide raiders are strewn in death before their wrecked bomber. NATS landing strip is just behind.

NATS' OKI PIONEERS HAVE EARNED A REST

While NATS Unit Okinawa and VRE-1 continue to evacuate more wounded than all other services combined, the handful of men and officers who first went into Oki six days after invasion and worked while Japs were still attacking Yontan Field are back at Honolulu for a rest and reassignment. About the record they're now part of, they modestly refuse comment; but the job they did seems to sum up their spirit: "To hell with the Japs--let's load those wounded!"



Lt.(jg) G.S. Gaillard

"Teamwork that was 4.0," said Lt.,(jg) George S. Gaillard Jr.. first O-in-C, "spelled success. It wasn't at all unusual to see a radioman helping corpsmen load litters into a plane. Corpsmen were handing parts to working mechs, and preparing food for the crew. Transportation men were comforting patients on the ground."

Handicapped by lack of equipment, the Oki crew nevertheless handled as many as 11 NATS aircraft in a day. One day 365 patients and passengers were flown in and out of Oki, total cargo handled was 20 tons, and the mail load totaled 15 tons. Just incidental, the crew will tell you, is that torrents of rain had reduced the field to a sea of mud.

"Primitive living conditions and Jap bombing every night," asserted Lt. Comdr. H.E. Hinman, ex-Marine paratrooperand first VRE-1 medical O-in-C at Oki, "should ordinarily have taken the zip out of the boys. But instead, their morale was remarkably high."

On the other hand, the enlisted men were profuse in their praise of the O-in-C and both flight surgeons, Lt. Comdrs. Hinman and J.B. MacGregor. "Every day," the men reported, "the doctors would make the rounds to see if any of the crew was hurt--and when they weren't screening patients, they'd pitch in and help, even with duties like carrying litters! Sometimes nearby Marines mistook the doctors for crewmen."

Among the medical unit personnel, the guidance and inspiration of Ensign S.H. Zumbrun and Lt.(jg) C.S. Schwarze rated high with the men.

One of the more spectacular incidents in the early days at Oki was the crash of a Marine pilot, about 100 yards from the NATS Unit. The F4U piled in upside down, but alert NATS CPOs Wheeler and Ianuzzi were on the spot to remove the pilot immediately after the crash and are credited with having saved his life.

Although heavy bombings of Yontan Field are now history, and although some equipment has trickled into the Unit, the men who have replaced the Oki "pioneers" still have no easy time. But they at least have had time to think about recreation. They're thinking about building--of all things--a miniature golf course! They've even queried Hedron Welfare about balls and putters.

ALL SMILES, these 'Oki pioneers' get squared away for rest and reassignment by Hedron Yeomen Ray Cooper and Herb McNeil. They are(l. to r.) Frank Wetzstein, Erik West, J.C. Wheeler, Frank Reed, Lou Vasion, Nate Fairchild, and Jim McMillin.

Those Loony Goonies

FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR

BOTTOMS UP

THE FIRST SIX MONTHS AT MIDWAY, NATSMEN WATCH THE GOONIES; THE LAST SIX, GOONIES WATCH NATSMAN

Except for its ridiculous takeoff and landing characteristics, the Gooney bird is practically good enough to qualify for the NATSPac fleet. This resident of Midway and other islands of the northwestern Hawaiian chain requires an obstruction-free runway of 50 feet to become airborne or put down; and even after thousands of years of Gooney history, it still hasn't learned enough to build a wind-sock to avoid downwind operations. When this error occurs, as it does frequently, the Gooney suffers a collapsed landing gear or tail assembly; it picks itself up from the coral and sand and looks around to see who shoved.

The Gooney's payload is not up to NATSPac standards, either; but Goonies have children, which is more than can be said for Skymasters. After a several months tour of sea duty they come ashore in November and each female worth her salt lays one white-and-red-marked egg which, nine weeks later, becomes a baby Gooney covered with thick gray down. The infant rests in its shallow, sandy hole three months, merely eating its parents' handouts of pre-digested fish, gradually growing feathers, and getting ready for that harrowing first takeoff.

After it has spun in, crash landed and otherwise checked out, the young Gooney gets its wings and moves on to the social whirl. It develops a wide interest in civic affairs and learns to perform the varied, rhythmic steps of the Gooney Dance. Choosing a partner, the entertainingly awkward bird raises its bill high and emits a loud "Ah!" The partner responds in kind and then each bows to the other a couple of times. Then there is a wild shuffling of feet, chattering and crossing of bills. The tempo increases, the dance grows faster and hotter, until at last the male looks skyward and moans. The lady coyly tucks her head under her wing; which is generally a mistake, for the boy friend usually walks away in disgust.

As his dancing improves, the male Gooney is more appreciated by his neighbors, and he begins to feel and act like the Mayor of Midway. This fool's paradise is blown sky high, however, when his favorite dancing partner lays an egg. Paralyzed, he gapes at the potential new mouth to feed. His playboy career comes to a screaming halt. Thereafter, life is routine and colorless.

Some who visit this area claim falsely that life with the Goonies causes "rock happiness". Nothing could be more ridiculous. The Gooney dance, for example, is a thing of beauty; although it is not easy for the layman to interpret it, we NATSmen understand its full significance. One of our clan is at this very moment out on the sands instructing young Goonies. We haven't any kick at all on duty at Midway---it's just that we continue to grow these damned feathers.---G. E. LOUDENBACK, L. L. SORRELL, J. M. TAYLOR.

WHITE GOONEY

AIR BRAKES

GOONEY JIVE

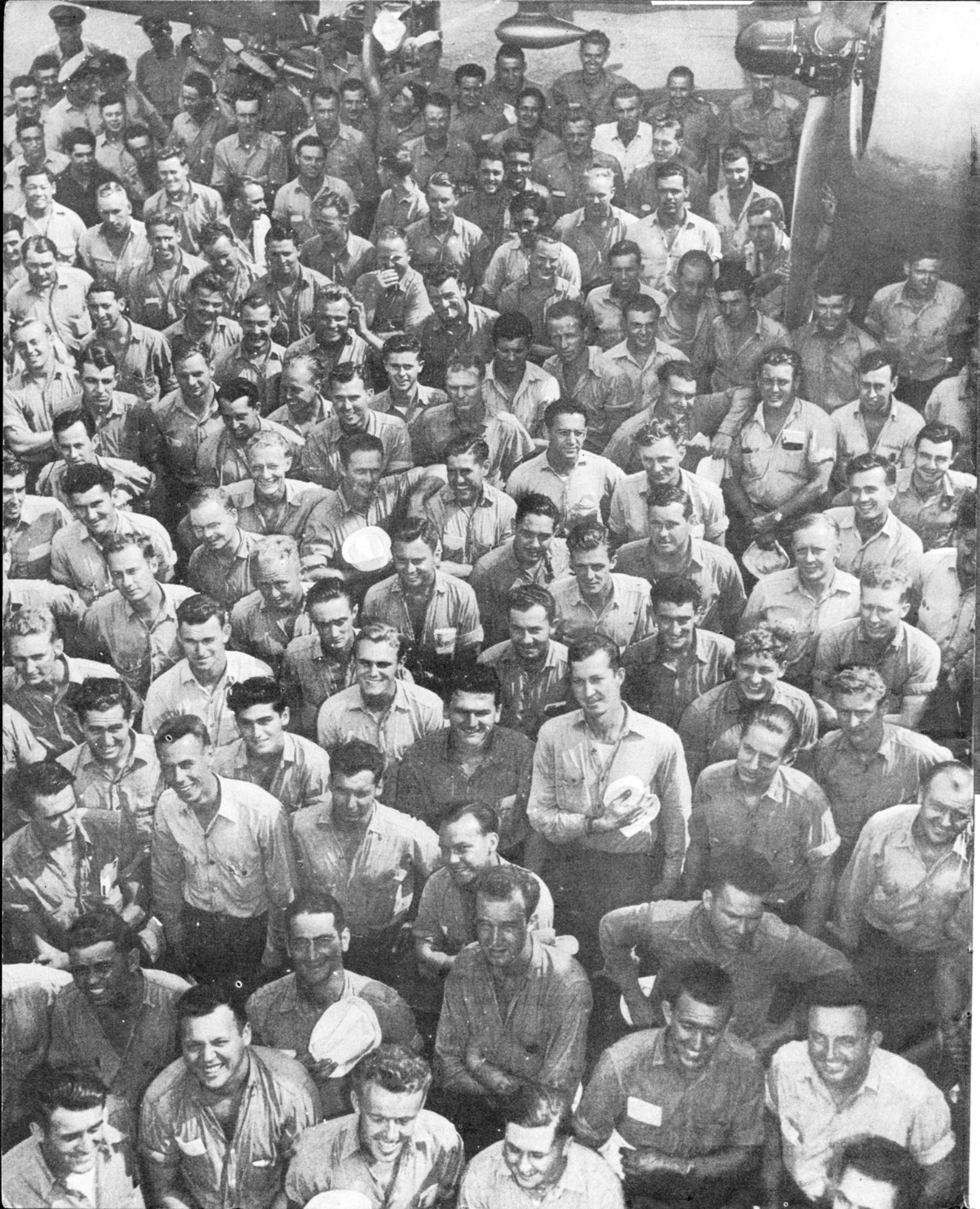
BLACK GOONEY

TAILSPIN

DOWNWIND LANDING

FLAPS DOWN

INTO THE BLUE



MAIL BAG

SAME SOPAC, WRONG ISLAND

The following is quoted from the letters column of Air News, NAS Honolulu paper:

NATS UNIT HONOLULU

EDITOR:

Did you see the May Nats Packet? I think you will all agree it is the best edition yet published. But here is where my gripe comes in. . .

Why should SoPac be considered the Garden Spot of the Pacific? The two pictures are strictly 'Samoa,' and can hardly be considered the SoPac that was told Good Bye. Of course, if I could have caught a regular scheduled R4D and paid Samoa a visit once in awhile, I, too, would regret leaving.

As for the 'Pretty Girls' at Funafuti, well, you have me guessing. Maybe my six months there didn't let me see everything after all! The girls that are there (call them pretty if you like) are so few and so restricted that you had to feel sorry for the native boys, let alone cut in on them.

A. WHITE HAT

AIR NEWS--EDITOR'S NOTE:

Ens. Gilmore, Nats Packet O-in-C says, 'Before running the 'SoPac Fades into History' story, we searched everywhere for pictures of ants crawling into people's ears, rats gnawing on toes, and sweat pouring off weary Natsmen stuck on such atolls as Funafuti. But everyone with a camera in the SoPac seemed to have concentrated on scenic landscapes or buxom young ladies. So, we compromised by running the glamor shots, then telling about the horrors in the story which followed.

'You have got a good point, though, White Hat--we agree with you. Packet aims to tell what NATSPac is doing, and we're counting on fellows like you to help keep the record straight.'

MEN BEHIND THE FLIGHT

These are a few of the Aviation Machinist's Mates whose expert maintenance work helps keep 50 NATSPac planes in the air every minute of every day. Before each flight it's the AMMs' job to insure that the plane is safe and airworthy from the static cup on the tail to the loop antenna in the bow. These men happen to be in VR-10 at Honolulu, but they're typical of NATSPac's alert 'mechs' from Point Barrow to Puerto Princesa, Oakland to Okinawa.

VITAMINS AND THINGS

LOS ANGELES

EDITOR:

Say, no wonder you men don't want to come home from those Pacific Islands! With those cute flight nurses and WAVEs pictured in your Nats Packet, why should you?

And Heavens! those native gals certainly have very 'outstanding' features, don't they? Guess it will take more than vitamins for some of us to become sweater girls.

Anyhow, don't forget us here at home.

CHARLOTTE

PHILIPPINE RIBBON

MANUS

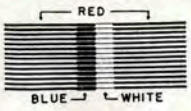
EDITOR:

I've been a member of a crew transporting whole blood, etc., to the various fields on the Philippines since the first field has been open. Do I rate the Philippine Liberation Ribbon?

'1500 HRS. PAC TIME'

EDITOR'S NOTE---You don't state definitely when you first flew into the Philippines, or for how long, so NATS PACKET can only quote AlNav No. 64 of 5 April 1945, which lists qualifications for eligibility. It includes as eligible personnel those who were crew members of an airplane 'which flew over Philippine territory from 17 Oct. to 20 Oct. 1944.' Also, those who 'served in the Philippine waters for not less than 30 days during the period from 17 October 1944 to a terminal date to be announced.

Philippine Liberation Ribbon



AM I A SAILOR ?

GUAM

EDITOR:

The other night I wanted to inspect an R5D but there was no ladder handy--just that knotted manila line hanging down from the hatch. A mech saw my dilemma and offered to get a ladder for me. Just then several more fellows came up and I said, 'Never mind the ladder, men--I'll go up hand over hand. Near the top my arms turned to jelly and I let go, falling on my piazza. The gang howled. 'Never mind the stretcher, I announced, 'I'll crawl away hand over hand.'

Do you think I'll ever be a sailor?

STEVE

ILL AT EASE OVERSEAS

NATS UNIT OKINAWA

EDITOR:

Our weather is P. P. In fact, it has been so poor that the ATOs (Allergic to Operations) have decided that our Balloon Buster, or should I say Crystal Gazer, is a necessary evil. However, with the bad comes the good and that is when the clouds cover up Tojo's Lantern (moon to you Boots) and Charlie doesn't come over.

The last time Chuck (Charlie has been over so often now that we call him Chuck for short, but I hope not for long) came over he put on such a fine show that he kept all hands up all night.

There were different reactions to the raid. Some of the boys thought it was an invasion and shoved off into the hills. Others broke out 'K' rations and calmly watched the show from a safe distance, while still others just set to digging deeper into their foxholes.

Some moved about like a walking arsenal with hand grenades, smoke bombs and ammunition strapped to their sides, a pistol and a machine gun in their hands. A couple even had knives between their teeth. As for your writer, he was mighty ill at ease overseas.

Today a few of the boys got notice of their increase in rate and there was the matter of a dunking. This would have been a problem to some sailors, but not to us at Oki. We just dunked them in one of the nice, large mud puddles that dot our garden island. Yes, it's a garden island, because they're sure digging it up.

Excuse me while I open the tent flap to let a bulldozer through. . .

'OVER AND OUT'

ARE YOU NATS-WISE ?

(Answers to Questions on Page 8)

1. Rear Admiral J. W. Reeves, Jr.
2. Eight days after invasion, known as L-plus-8 (April 8).
3. 'V' designates heavier than air; 'R' means transport.
4. A mobile, demountable type of utility crane, used occasionally by NATS for cargo hoisting.
5. The four-bladed inboard props are made of steel and are less susceptible to corrosion from salt water spray thrown up by the hull. The three-bladed outboards, relatively spray free, are made of aluminum. There is no three-bladed steel prop at present.

"NATS"
Jean Parker